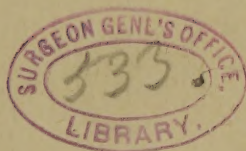


Blatchford (Jas W.)

Homoeopathy x x x





HOMŒOPATHY,
AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE RENSSELAER COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, JUNE 14, 1842.

BY THOS. W. BLATCHFORD, M. D., PRESIDENT.

———"the 'homœopathic system,' a Germanic reverie of transcendental nonsense; *cui fumus pro fundamento*."—CROSSE.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.





HOMOEOPATHY.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE RUSSELLIAN COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY,

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 1862.

BY THOS. W. BLAYLOCK, M. D., President.

PRINTED BY J. H. B. DUBLIN, 1862.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.



At the annual meeting of the Rensselaer County Medical Society, held in this city on the 14th of June, 1842, on motion of Dr. C. S. J. Goodrich,

Resolved, That the thanks of the Society be and they are hereby presented to the President, for the ingenious and interesting address this day delivered before the Society, and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication in the "Transactions of the State Society."

On motion of Dr. Skilton, amended by Dr. Robbins,

Resolved, That Dr. Blatchford be requested to deliver the same in the Court House and consent to its publication in the Troy papers.

The following gentlemen were appointed a committee to carry the above resolutions into effect, viz: A. Robbins, M. D., C. S. J. Goodrich, M. D., and Dr. A. J. Skilton.

[Correspondence.]

TROY, June 25, 1842.

T. W. BLATCHFORD, M. D.,

Sir—The undersigned, a Committee appointed by the Medical Society of this county on the 14th inst., to solicit the publication of your address on the subject of Homœopathy, have the honor to request that you will deliver the same in the Court House in this city on Tuesday evening next, and that a copy of the same be given for publication.

Yours, respectfully,

AMATUS ROBBINS, }
C. S. J. GOODRICH, } Committee.
A. J. SKILTON, }

TROY, June 25, 1842.

Gentlemen—I cannot but feel highly gratified at the satisfaction my late address on the subject of Homœopathy seems to have afforded my medical brethren. I shall most cheerfully comply with your request, and will hold myself in readiness to repeat it on Tuesday evening in the Court House as desired.

Yours, sincerely,

THOS. W. BLATCHFORD.

To A. ROBBINS, M. D., C. S. J. GOODRICH, M. D., Dr. A. J. SKILTON,
Committee.

• ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN:—

In conformity with the 4th chapter and 2nd section of the By-Laws of the Rensselaer Co., Medical Society, making it obligatory upon "the President to deliver a dissertation on some medical or scientific subject at the annual meeting closing the year of his election," and having been at a loss for some time to know upon what subject to address you, I have concluded to make it the occasion of introducing to your notice some features of a subject claiming to be a new discovery in the field of medical science, and asserting pretensions higher and broader than any preceding discovery, not only in medical science, but in the vast range of all the sciences since the dawn of the Christian era. A science, too, which does not condescend to stand as an adjuvant of any other, but single handed and alone contends for and predicts the upturning and the downtreading of all other methods of curing disease. No matter how long they have been cherished, no matter how successful they may have proved in practice, or how full of truth and sagacity their principles, they are all nothing. The labors and discoveries of physicians since the time of Hippocrates are all styled "learned lumber" by the author of the system to which I allude, and he unblushingly and fearlessly stands forth and says, without even the most remote idea of ever being contradicted that no disease was ever properly or radically cured which was not cured homœopathically, and never can be.

You will understand, then, gentlemen, that I design to introduce to your notice something about Homœopathy. Let your imaginations then draw a picture of this Lilliputian monster strutting forth and demanding notice in all the pompons and inflated magnificence of its infinitesimal "dynamic power" (to use Homœopathian language) a creature of a new creation, striking *plebeians* dumb with its heraldry of wonderful achievements and astounding the literati themselves with its high pretensions to the only true philosophy; being the very climax of the inductive system itself, and inscribing upon its banner, to float in every breeze, its proud motto, in dignified Latin, *similia similibus curantur*. This is its magic wand, by whose potential flourish, disease vanishes like darkness before the rising orb of day, or "like wizards at the crowing of the cock." Nay, unless the trumpet-tones of its heraldry give us deceptive and lying sounds, death itself seems

almost to stand abashed, doubtful as to the propriety of venturing a combat, lest his "grim majesty" himself might fall. Just listen to the termination of one single echo as found in the Troy Budget of the 7th of May. Speaking of its power over disease he says, "and in short, all cases where there is any hope of cure, and in many cases where there is no hope." The Doctor finds it impossible through the medium of any written language to give an "adequate idea of the advantages of the practice. "These are sounds to mortal ears addressed," and by one who claims the honor of being the first who introduced this death-appalling system into this country, and who, in the same communication, tells us he "is in the constant practice of receiving the latest and the best works on Homœopathy of American and European authors and, is thus prepared to treat patients according to the latest discoveries and observations."

Verily one is so forcibly reminded of Burns's celebrated poem of "Death and Dr Hornbrook," that I trust you will pardon me for the following altered extract:

Ay, ay, quoth Death, and shook his head,
It's e'en a long, long time, indeed,
Since I began to nick the thread,

And choak the breath;
Folks must do something for their bread,
And so must Death.

Six thousand years are near hard fled,
Since I was to the butchering bred,
And many a scheme in vain's been laid

To stop or scare me,
'Till one Hornbrook took up the trade
And faith he'll waur me.

'Twas yesterday, no farther gone,
I threw a noble dart at one;
Wi' less I'm sure I've hundreds slain.

But de'il ma' care,
It just played dirl upon the bane,
And did na' mair.

Hornbrook was by wi' ready art,
And had so fortified the part,
That when I looked to my dart,

It was so blunt
It never could have pierced the heart
Of a kail runt.

What is Homœopathy? is a question which I conceive has been much oftener asked than answer-

ed; principally because the difficulty of defining it is about equal to that of defining *nothing*. It is much easier to say what it is not, than to say what it is. Its phases are so numerous, its aspects so varied, and its peculiarities so multiplied, that it becomes very difficult to view it as a whole—to shape its infinity into ideal materiality; and if it is not a 'footless stocking without a leg,' it is quite as indefinitely intangible. For a year past I have paid some little attention to it, and am prepared to define it, until a better definition shall be offered; *The Incomprehensible Science of Infinitesimal Med-icality*—and if it is adapted to the capacity and the wants of any portion of animated nature, it must be that of some order of animals essentially differing from man both in mental and physical structure.

HOMŒOPATHY, then, proposes to be a *new method* of curing diseases; not the improvement of any existing system, but a new one, new ab initio; the astonishing production too of one single gigantic Leviathan mind; so simple, could one believe the author's pretensions, that a child could understand it, and yet so vast, so comprehensive, that only one in a thousand can practise it.

Hahnemann, the author of Homœopathy, was born in Upper Saxony in 1755, and attributes his wonderful discovery entirely to accident. One of his biographers thus succinctly relates the circumstance: "His school education being completed, he applied himself to the study of Natural Philosophy and Natural History, and afterwards prosecuted the study of medicine at Leipsic. On commencing the study of medicine he soon became disgusted with the mass of contradictory assertions and theories which then existed. "He found," says his biographer, "every thing in this department, "obscure, hypothetical and vague, and resolved to "abandon the medical profession. Having been previously engaged in the study of Chemistry, he determined on translating into his native language the best "English and French works on the subject." Now comes the important epoch, which, if not "big with the fate of Cæsar and of Rome," is laden with something vastly more important in the estimation of Hahnemann and his disciples. "Whilst engaged," continues the same writer, "in translating the *Materia Medica* of the illustrious Cullen in "1790, (being then 35 years of age,) in which the "febrifuge virtues of the Peruvian bark are described, he became fired with the desire of ascertaining its mode of action. Whilst in the enjoyment of the most robust health, he commenced "the use of this substance and in a short time was "attacked with all the symptoms of intermittent "fever, similar, in every respect, to those which that "medicine is known to cure."

His biographer here makes an important omission, he neglects to tell us how this factitious intermittent was cured, but I presume of course by continuing on with his bark, for that was then the only or about the only course to be followed, and was long prior to the discovery of the infinitesimal divisibility of doses. A little bark then produces a disease which a little more will cure. But to continue the extract: "Being struck," says he, "with the iden-

tity of the two diseases, viz: the intermittent from bark, and the intermittent from malaria, he immediately *divined* (just mark the verb by which his biographer chooses to express the act, there must be divinity about Hahnemann) the great truth "which has become the foundation of the new doctrine of Homœopathy. In this investigation, he arrived at this conclusion: That the substance possessed an inherent power of exciting in healthy "subjects the same symptoms which it is said to cure "in the sick. Taking this law for his guide he recommenced the practice of physic with every prospect of his labors being crowned with success; but "his fond expectations were blasted, for," says our "author, "like many other discoverers in medicine, "he was persecuted with the utmost rigor, and in "1820 he quitted his native country in disgust." He now I believe resides in France, or did in 1841, and must be in the 88th year of his age. When 80 years of age he married a rich widow of Paris, "who," another biographer says, not only loves him but "adores him;" and he might have added, and all his followers worship him likewise.

Now two circumstances in the above sketch deserve a passing notice. 1. That upon the very commencement of his medical education he became disgusted with the profession he had chosen, and consequently could not have been, to say the least, a very impartial observer of the facts and opinions he was called to review; and as one is not very likely to form correct notions of a subject he does not admire, so Hahnemann having from the commencement an obliquity of judgment must have studied medicine to very little advantage. His disgust too it appears was of no trifling character, but he carried it to such a degree as actually for about eight years to relinquish entirely the practice of his profession and never would have resumed it but for the occurrence above referred to respecting the translation of Cullen's *Materia Medica*. The second circumstance is the strange fact that so talented a benefactor not only of his own countrymen, but the whole world of humanity, and one whose success according to the testimony of his adoring disciples, was palpable and overwhelming, should be so violently persecuted as to permit his enemies to triumph in his voluntary and perpetual banishment from his native country, taking refuge in a land of strangers, at a period of life when country and kindred and home are more prized than at any other.

The explanation given to so singular a circumstance by his biographer, viz: the discovery and threatened enforcement of some ancient obsolete law relating to the preparation and sale of certain drugs, to my mind but poorly accounts for it.

As every man has a right to name his offspring to suit his own fancy, so Hahnemann in the legitimate exercise of this right named his system Homœopathy, after two Greek words signifying analagous suffering, or, according to an ancient adage, the hair of the same dog will cure the bite.

The great law of Nature, as he calls it, and which he pretended to discover and upon which his system is founded, "*Similia similibus curantur*," was by no means a new or an unheard of idea among physi-

cians. Hippocrates himself the Father of physic, as he is pre-eminently called, notices it 2000 years ago. And different writers from that distant day to the present have done the same, and especially Stahl, the Danish Philosopher and physician, who flourished a century earlier than the author of Homœopathy, inculcates it as clearly and distinctly as does Hahnemann or any of his followers. Indeed, you can scarcely take up a system of the practice of physic where this idea is not to a certain extent recognized. Cathartics are prescribed for diarrhoea, emetics for sick stomach, snow for frosted extremities, stimulants for burns, and certain other inflammations, diuretics for strangury, sulphuric acid for sour stomach, &c. &c. But to insist that because some diseases are cured or successfully treated by the rule *similia similibus*, that therefore all must be, is a specimen of reasoning that seems to me cannot pass current in the 19th century.—Listen to the language of Hahnemann as contained in his Organon. “Neither the efforts of nature, says he, nor the skill of the physician has ever been able to cure a disease by a dissimilar morbid power, what ever energy they may have possessed; also, that a cure is not to be obtained but by a morbid power capable of producing symptoms that are similar and at the same time a little stronger;” that is, I presume, *similia similibus*, only a little stronger; if you burn your finger and desire to cure it quick, you must burn it a little deeper, and if you freeze your limbs you will cure them by freezing them a little harder! But to continue our extracts from this Homœopathic Shaster. “The cause of this wonderful phenomenon,” he says, “rests with the eternal and irrevocable law of nature, which was not hitherto understood.” Page 104. Again, “by this method alone, can we cure diseases in the most speedy, certain and permanent manner, because it is grounded upon an eternal, unerring law of nature.” Page 106, again, “There remains accordingly no other method of applying medicines profitably in disease than the Homœopathic.” Page 88. Again, “this phenomenon is founded on the natural law of Homœopathy, a law unknown until the present time, although it has on all occasions formed the basis of every visible cure.” And again, “observation, reflection and experience have unfolded to me that the best and truest method of cure is founded on the principle *similia similibus*,” and then at the 89th page, he has a long and truly magnificent paragraph to show that this law, this magic wand, is the identical one which is employed by the author of nature to dispel midnight darkness. “Why,” says he, why does the brilliant planet Jupiter disappear in the twilight from the eyes of “him who gazes at it? Why, because a similar but more potent power, the light of breaking day “then acts upon these organs.

“Until the present day” he says on page 44, “no person has ever inculcated this Homœopathic mode of treatment, and yet more” he continues, “no one has ever put it in practice.” Still strange as it may appear, we find in this Organon, at page 76, the following paragraph. “The Danish physician Stahl has above all other writers expressed his conviction on this head most unequivocally. He speaks

in the following terms. “The received method in medicine of treating diseases by opposite remedies, that is to say, by medicines which are opposed to the effects they produce is completely false and absurd. I am convinced, on the contrary, that diseases are subdued by agents which produce a similar affection: burns, by the heat of a fire to which the parts are exposed; the frost bite, by snow, or icy cold water; and inflammations and contusions, by spirituous applications. It is by these means, I have succeeded in curing a disposition to acidity of the stomach by using very small doses of Sulphuric Acid in cases where a multitude of absorbing powders had been administered to no purpose.” Now I doubt whether Hahnemann or any of his followers ever more clearly “*inculcated or more practically enforced the doctrine ‘similia similibus curantur.’*” At pages 88, 89 and 111, of this litero-medical curiosity, we find him estimating the value of all past experience except just that which tallies with his own ridiculous notions. “Plain experience” says he, “not that kind acquired by our ordinary practitioners after having long combated with a heap of complicated prescriptions, a multitude of diseases which they never examined with care and which (true to the errors of the old school) they regarded as being already included in our pathology, thinking that they perceived in them some imaginary morbid principle, or some internal anomaly not less hypothetical. In fact, they were in the habit of seeing something, but they knew not what they saw, and they arrived at conclusions which a deity alone could unravel in the midst of so great a concourse of diverse powers acting upon an unknown subject, a result from which no information could be gained. Fifty years of such experience, are like 50 years passed looking through a Kaleidoscope, which full of unknown things of varied colors, revolves continually upon itself; there would be seen thousands of figures changing their forms every instant without a possibility of accounting for any of them.” Again, “In short the former schools of medicine have never calculated how often the secondary efforts of their medicines have tended to increase the malady or even bring on something that was still worse, of which experience has given us examples that are enough to inspire the soul with terror.” Again, “If physicians had been capable of reflecting upon the sad results of their remedies, they would long ago have arrived at the great truth by which they might cure diseases perfectly and permanently.” Again, “My observations are drawn from true experience, and a number of facts that have hitherto escaped the notice of every other physician although they were immediately before their view, perfectly evident in their nature and of the deepest importance to the medical art.”

In such sentiments and expressions as the above, and the writings of Hahnemann abound in the like, it is difficult to determine which most to admire, ignorance, impudence, arrogance, or presumption. To assert, as Hahnemann repeatedly does, that all physicians who do not embrace the ‘*similia similibus*’ plan of treatment, practise invariably upon the contrary plan; or as Galen termed it, ‘*contraria contra-*

his curantur,* is altogether a gratuitous assertion. And the oft repeated insinuation that their motives are all mercenary, and that they have neither the patience, comfort and safety, nor the advancement of the healing art as closely in view as the author of the new method, arrogating to himself and his disciples all the virtue and all the praise, is too contemptible to need refutation—too purely Homœopathic for Allopathy further to notice. Allopathy, be it remembered, is a term applied by Hahnemann indiscriminately to all practitioners of the old school, and for convenience sake only I shall use it. Physicians are now, and most assuredly ever have been at perfect liberty to combat disease either by the rule *similia similibus* or *contraria contrariis*, just as their experience and their enlightened judgment shall dictate. I certainly know of none who does not exercise this right. That a larger class of diseases than have usually been treated by the rule *similia similibus* may be better managed by it than by its opposite, is very possible, and if Homœopathy had proposed such an investigation, I am certain not an enlightened physician in any enlightened country under heaven would have raised a finger of hindrance or a note of opposition, and, as it is, this part of the subject deserves to be looked into and examined diligently, for medical science is as yet far from being perfected; much still remains to be accomplished, but the way to improve it certainly can never be to malign the whole profession, to impeach the motives of its supports and ornaments, to question the designs of a class of men whose professional characters have hitherto at least for the most part been away beyond the possibility of reproach, to hold such men up to the world as a body of men not trustworthy, certainly cannot advance that science they profess to love and cherish. Pardon me for quoting the 76th aphorism of the Organon. It reads thus: "The Dispenser of all good has granted us aid by means of Homœopathy for the removal of *natural diseases* only, but those which have been superinduced by a false art—those in which the human organism has been maltreated and crippled both internally and externally by means of pernicious medication; the vital power itself—provided indeed it be not already too much enfeebled by such assaults, and can employ uninterruptedly, whole years to the serious process—the vital powers must remove those factitious diseases (assisted by appropriate aid directed against a chronic miasm which probably still lies concealed within.) An art of healing intended for re-establishing to their normal condition those countless morbid changes of the body which are often induced by the mischievous arts of Allopathy, does not nor cannot exist."

Such language as this, in my ears, sounds more like that of the ignorant mercenary empirick than of a learned philosopher, language addressed more to the passions and the prejudice of the unlearned multitude, than to the reason and reflection of the intelligent portion of mankind. To analyze it how does it read? "Come to me for help when you get sick, I can cure you in the only way the

dispenser of all good will or ever can bless; my neighbor if he has not already, will certainly poison you past remedy; if you apply at once it may be I can assist you." But enough of this and now let us look at another feature of our subject.

Growing out of an unvarying adherence to the rule *similia similibus* curantur, is another discovery no less important in the estimation of Homœopaths, the merit of which is with unanimous consent ascribed to Hahnemann; and that is, to a certain extent and under certain circumstances, the more you reduce the dose of a medicine the more you increase its power.

This discovery, I am led to consider as the necessary result of following out this law in practice; for he must have found that however successfully he might sometimes have treated diseases under it, that invariably to give cathartics in all bowel complaints, stimulants in all inflammations, tonics in all fevers, narcotics in all mental diseases, astringents in all constipations, &c., would not long succeed, and he, doubtless, thus came to the wise conclusion, that it was far better for patient and physician both, to give nothing at all, or next to nothing, and leave the cure to nature, (no bad doctor, either, in very many cases,) and the patient's own imagination; and hence, rather than relinquish his favorite law—rather than commit this, his darling offspring, to the tomb of oblivion—the astonishing, the mighty discovery was made, that infinitesimal doses of medicine can combat disease in all its various forms with a power which increases as it diminishes. Is not this an incomprehensible science, indeed? Where is the mortal mind of capacity sufficient to grasp such a thought? Could a like discovery be made in dietetics, and man once be made to believe and act upon the belief, that the more we reduced the quantity of our food the greater would be its power to sustain the constant daily waste to which the animal frame is subject, then, indeed, the earthly delight of the hard working laborer would reach its climax. Or should a similar discovery be made in the science of government, that the more the executive could reduce the military force of the country, the more capable would the government be to repel an invading army, a perfect revolution in military tactics would then be achieved; for the least would at once become the greatest. But as yet, the honor and the power of this discovery only belong to medicine—"quis talia fando

Temperet a lachrymis?"

But, you will exclaim, can this thing be? is it true that the science of medicine is so highly distinguished, so exalted above all its fellows? If you have any doubts, the following extract will remove them all:

"It is ascertained," says a French Homœopathic writer, of a celebrity little inferior to that of Hahnemann himself, "that by these dilutions, the body of the substance has been diluted or expanded in its surface and in this manner not only affects a greater number of our organs, when taken, but also develops all its atoms which remain inactive in its compact state, and by consequence allows a display of their entire action. For example, says he, 100 drops of the first dilution of any medicine

*Contraries are cured by contraries. †The itch.

"will produce, together, an effect *infinitely* more decided than can be obtained from a single drop of the crude tincture. Whence it appears that while a single drop of the 30th dilution in itself may be more feeble than a drop of the first, a certain number of drops may constitute a dose, which by the extension of its active atoms will not only prove equal, but even surpass the power of the first dilutions." Such an infinitesimal discovery as this, it seems to me, casts all previous discoveries in the shade, and renders idle, nay, worse than idle, all contention and discussion about the "eternal law of nature" with which Homœopaths first started. For when we consider the atomic weapons of their warfare, and the microscopic minuteness of their doses, they are so perfectly powerless that whether they are administered *similia similibus* or *contraria contrariis*, it is all one as far as the power of physis is concerned. It must be so, it can't possibly be otherwise. Sulphur, for instance, is one of their approved remedies. They direct one grain to be triturated with 100 grains of sugar of milk which constitutes the 1st division, [or dilution, when applied to liquids,] then one grain of that is to be triturated with 100 more grains of sugar of milk which makes the 2nd division, then one grain of the 2nd thus prepared with 100 grains more of sugar, and so on to the 30th or 40th attenuation. Hahnemann thought its greatest "dynamic power" was reached at the 30th and consequently always chose the 30th in his practice. Mure, however, another high Homœopathic authority, took the 1st dilution in all acute diseases, and the last in all chronic. Jahr also accords with this, as we learn from the following extract: "We think," says he, "that the 1st attenuations generally answer the best for maladies whose progress is rapid, while the last accord with those whose progress is slow."

Imagination itself seems wearied in its attempted flight to ascertain the actual amount of sulphur contained in the 40th attenuation. Chemistry informs us that sulphur is a universal attendant on albumen, and exists in the eggs of birds in considerable quantities; now in accordance with such attenuation, the sulphur existing in one humming bird's egg is more than enough to impregnate millions of hogsheds of the 40th dilution, and not only abundantly sufficient to supply all the homœopaths in this world, but in all worlds if they were filled with homœopaths.

"It is of little import" says Hahnemann, page 204, "whether the attenuation goes so far as to appear almost impossible to ordinary physicians whose minds feed on no other ideas but what are gross and material. Mathematicians will inform them that in whatever number of parts they may divide a substance, each portion still retains a *small share*; that consequently the most diminutive part that can be conceived of never ceases to be something."

Can the human mind conceive of a stranger process of reasoning to prove the efficacy and power of attenuated doses of medicine? So might the miser reason to the starving mendicant asking for food; putting a drop of milk in an ocean of water and giving him to drink, would assuredly be giv-

ing him food, but what then? does that prove its power to satisfy the cravings of hunger? certainly it does, just as much as the other proves the power of infinitesimal doses of medicine to combat disease.

Another mode of reasoning adopted to prove the power of their infinitesimal doses is this: It takes, say they, but a small amount of poison to *infect* the body and *produce* disease; is it then unreasonable to suppose that as small a quantity of medicine can remove it? I would answer such a question by simply asking another. It takes but a single spark of fire to spring a mine, to fire a magazine, or to blow up a man of war—is it unreasonable to suppose that as small an amount of something can repair the damage? a little fire is sufficient to envelope in flames a whole city,—is it unreasonable to suppose that as small a quantity of water is sufficient to extinguish it? To those who wield such arguments we may with propriety apply the ancient paradox, "*credo, quia impossibile est.*" I believe *because* it is impossible.

The food we consume and the air we breathe are loaded with homœopathic agents. The only reason why the immense amount of them we daily receive does not destroy us outright, I presume is, because their "latent power" their "dynamic virtue" has not been exalted by a due course of trituration and agitation, and this constitutes the *third great discovery of this great man*. This too may be considered as the legitimate offspring of that which preceded it. For Hahnemann must very soon have perceived that notwithstanding man's proneness to gullibility, especially when sickness and its relief are concerned, the public could not be made to swallow, for any length of time, such a monstrous absurdity as the increase of power by diminution, without some compensating influence. Hence his fruitful genius again became pregnant, and after a due period of gestation laboring to produce something which would prove at least in theory, an adequate supply for nothing, this bantling was brought forth—this new unheard of power—this power of weakness—this strength of diminution; and it has proved a well-favored and acceptable offspring to the whole fraternity, exactly adapted to the necessity of the case, being essential to the "exaltation of latent virtue."

Its birth is thus announced in the *Organon*, page 205: "Homœopathic medicines acquire, at each division or dilution, a new degree of power by the *rubbing* or *shaking* they undergo; a means of developing the inherent virtues of medicines that was unknown till my time; and which is so energetic that latterly I have been forced by experience to reduce the number of shakes to *two*, of which I formerly prescribed ten to each dilution." He also gives directions not to carry these dilutions any great distance in a liquid form for fear the agitation may so powerfully exalt their latent virtues as to render their administration dangerous; hence, globules of sugar of milk must be impregnated with them and thus transported from place to place in a dry state. Soon, though the spirit might have been ever so willing, the flesh became weak; and human muscles failed in supplying force sufficient for its proper evolution. "We have seen," says Jahr,

"the ingenious instrument of trituration invented by Mure, and the really powerful machine with which he effects the dilution of his medicines; we have used the medicines prepared by these means and must confess that in respect to activity, they absolutely leave nothing to be desired, unless that their effects are sometimes in direct proportion to the increased number of shakings they may have received. The essential requisite is that the mixture shall be as intimate as possible," and, he continues, "to produce this result it is necessary that the substances be agitated up to a certain point, but for a medicine mixed with alcohol in the proportion of 1 to 100 it is probable that after 50 or 100 shakings, the combination of all the atoms will be effected as completely as possible. The palpable advantage therefore" says he, "which a machine offers for shaking, appears in the power of preparing medicines in the proportion of 1 to 1000, and perhaps, also, 1 to 10,000, advancing even up to the 30th attenuation." Hahnemann says, sometimes to 100 and even higher. Just reflect for a moment—one grain divided by 100 cyphers affixed to a unit; verily the next discovery of Hahnemann's mighty mind must be a new method of calculating the infinity of numbers—a desideratum now absolutely needed—we may here write what we cannot conveniently utter. Millionths of billionths of quadrillions don't begin to touch it. Oh, the march of intellect. Why, men of common capacity can only stand like the rustic in a crowded city, with eyes and ears and mouth fully dilated, fairly petrified with wonder and astonishment.—But, to continue our extract. "Through a mechanism" says Jahr, which will conveniently allow agitation in so large proportions, we can obtain all that is to be coveted in the development of the virtue of medicines." To give you only some faint idea of the immense importance to Homœopathy of this shaking business, and the prodigious power of agitation, you must remember that they have ascertained to their satisfaction at least, that it imparts to perfectly inert, innoxious substances such as common wolf's-foot, flint, charcoal, table-salt, &c., &c., a power of action even surpassing arsenic itself. Don't you believe it? listen again to the Homœopathic oracle. "If we take" says he, "one grain of Lycopodium, or of pure carbon sufficiently triturated to become active, this grain will act more powerfully than an equal volume of the 30th dilution of arsenic!" Hahnemann attributes great virtue to the *direction* in which these shakings are made, and having somewhat reduced the number of shakings formerly thought necessary before the invention of Mure's machine, it is altogether probable that they will again be increased. "In regard" he says, "to the shaking of solutions for the development of the powerful drug virtues of late years, I have been forced by convincing experiments to reduce the ten shakes formerly prescribed to two, with the arm from above downwards;" doubtless, to draw down from above some cerulean influence to assist the dynamic powers of these solutions of nothingness.

A 4th discovery of Hahnemann, viz., that of the Psoric origin of all diseases, is promulgated to the

world in his 80th aphorism, after the following manner: "This Psora is the sole, true and fundamental cause that produces all the other countless forms of disease, which, under the name of nervous debility, hysteria, hemiplegia, hypochondriasis; insanity, melancholy, idiocy, madness, epilepsy, and spasms of all kinds, softening of the bones, or rickets, scoliosis and cyphosis, caries, cancer, fungus hematomas, pseudo-morphæ of all kinds, gravel, gout, hæmorrhoids, jaundice and cyanosis, dropsy, amenorrhœa, gastrorrhagia, epistaxis, hemoptysis, hæmaturia, metrorrhagia, asthma and phthisis ulcerosa, impotency and sterility, deafness, cataract and amaurosis, paralysis, loss of sense, pains of every kind &c. appear in our pathology as so many peculiar, distinct and independent diseases." Page 122 Organon.

This is the long list of diseases resulting from this "chronic miasm" so that with only two exceptions, syphilis and sycosis, Psora stands charged with the only germinating principle of every other disease that flesh is heir to. It seems then that every individual of the human family, and of other families besides, for all that we know to the contrary, every sick man, woman and child who is not laboring under one of the two exceptions has the itch, the true, the veritable itch, the genuine Scotch-fiddle.

Then he tells us how long his poor head was laboring under this mighty thought, before the world received it. "It cost me," says he, "12 years of study and research to discover this great truth which remained concealed from all my predecessors and cotemporaries, to establish the basis of its demonstrations and find out at the same time the principal antipsoric remedies that were fit to combat this hydra in all its different forms."

This itch, too, he tells us, is somewhat of an old settler among the human family; he does not, it is true, say whether Adam and Eve were afflicted with it in Paradise, or whether it was generated in the ark, where confessedly, animation was somewhat condensed, and from Noah and his offspring handed along down to these ends of creation; but he does tell us, to use his own words, "that this miasm has descended through the organizations of millions of individuals in the course of some hundreds of generations."

We have thus glanced at some few of the peculiarities of Homœopathy, those which may be considered as more especially fundamental to the system, viz: 1st. An invariable adherence to the rule "*similia similibus*." 2d. The augmentation of power by diminution of dose. 3d. The evolution of latent virtue in inert substances by protracted trituration and agitation; and 4th. The Psoric origin of all diseases. There are many other peculiarities however pertaining to this camæleon which neither my time nor your patience will allow us critically to review, such as the duration of effect of all their medicines being professedly accurately calculated; for instance, an infinitesimal dose of cinchona is set down as lasting 40 days, saffron, 7 days, Ipecac 5, common charcoal, whether animal or vegetable, 40, magnesia 50, mercury 3 to 4 weeks, silex 7 or 8 weeks, and so on through the whole catalogue. The list of medicinal agents they have already subjected to experiment exclusive of the mag-

net, is 201. There must be no compounding of medicine, no two ingredients must be administered at the same time; much stress is laid on this, and the severest censure heaped upon Allopathy for prescriptions containing several different medicines. Hahnemann endeavors to show that the effect can never be certain, that it must necessarily be fallacious, that one is constantly interfering with another; resembling I presume, an unruly set of lads in a work shop eternally quarrelling about some trifle instead of going straight ahead attending to their business, as they would be most likely to do if their number were small. Well, this all looks very pretty on paper, it is very specious, very captivating, calculated prodigiously to take, with the multitude; only one single simple substance at a time, and that, remember, only the homœopathic attenuation of infinity—for Hahnemann after dividing a drop and a grain into billions of millions of parts, adds, "you cannot give too small a quantity of any medicine." How does this idea of one single simple substance at a time, look upon close inspection?—Do we find the author of nature thus carrying on his great operations within our complicated machine? How is it with the bile, for instance, that natural purgative, as it were, of the alimentary canal. I am aware Homœopaths don't like to look within, as we shall have occasion soon to notice; but never mind, let us see if the Great Author of our being follows such a Homœopathic rule; is the BILE one single, simple homogeneous substance? Analysis tells us that human bile is a compound of no less than 11 different ingredients, and by no means always of uniform proportions: water, yellow insoluble matter, yellow soluble matter, resin, albumen, soda, phosphate of soda, sulphate of soda, muriate of soda, phosphate of lime and oxide of iron. But perhaps the bile is an exception. How is it with the Saliva and the Pancreatic juice? they are about alike as far as chemistry can ascertain. We find then Saliva, that fluid so essential to healthy digestion, and quantities of which are swallowed by a hearty, healthy man in 24 hours, consists of 17 ingredients. M. M. Leuret and Lassaigne analyzed pure Saliva and found it to contain water, mucus, traces of albumen, soda, chloride of potassium, carbonate and phosphate of lime; and besides these, Messrs Tiedmann and Gmelin, found the acetate, carbonate, phosphate, sulphate and muriate of potassa and the sulpho-cyanate of potassa, osmazome, and a little fat containing phosphorus.—(See Dunglison's Physiology.)

The gastric juice, the necessary medium of every dose of medicine until Hahnemann's great discovery of introducing them in an aeriform state through the nostrils and the breathing apparatus. The gastric juice, according to Prof. Emmet of Virginia University, consists of "free muriatic and acetic acids: phosphates and muriates, with bases of potassa, soda, magnesia and lime, and an animal matter soluble in cold water but insoluble in hot." And milk, that most simple of all simples, the very and the only food of earliest infancy, provided by a most skillful and unerring hand, consists of no less than 12 ingredients: water, oil, curd, extractive matter, sugar of milk, (the greatest gift of

Heaven to man, says Hahnemann, because he uses it so much,) acetic acid, muriate of soda, mur. pot., phosph. lime, phosph. mag., phosph. iron.

The blood, that fluid which courses to the minutest and the most remote parts of the body, avoiding none, consists of no less than 19 ingredients: the serum part 10, the cruror 9. It will be perceived that many of these ingredients are themselves compounds and some of them have not yet been analyzed, and the proportion of each ingredient is vastly, I had almost said infinitely, greater than Homœopathy allows to be administered, or even deems consistent with the safety of the patient.

Now it appears that the author of nature is not afraid of these pernicious, these health destroying compounds; but no matter for that, Homœopathy is, and that is enough to condemn them. Now, in serious soberness, I ask, what confidence can be placed in experiments with homœopathic doses, when so many opposing principles must incessantly interfere with their results, to say nothing of the food we constantly consume and the air we breathe.—Can any thing be more superlatively, Homœopathically ridiculous, and yet men of learning and sound sense in other matters suffer themselves to be guiled and duped by this shadow of all shadows, this vanity of all vanities. But to proceed: Another peculiarity of Homœopathy is, that before the time of Hahnemann, physicians and their patients always meant by *symptoms*, "affections, passions or accidents accompanying disease." Homœopathy, however, reverses this meaning and applies the term to the medicine instead of exclusively to the patient, so then every medicine has a certain set of symptoms belonging to it.

To ascertain the symptoms of any medicine, an individual is selected to be the subject of experiment. (See Med. Chir. Review, volume 30, page 144; also volume 25, page 492.) He must be a healthy individual; an educated physician is to be preferred, Hahnemann says, if he can be found, free from all excesses in eating and drinking, and capable of giving an intelligible account once, twice, or three times a day of all the sensations and occurrences he observes in himself for one or two months after having taken his infinitesimal dose of just about nothing at all. The number of symptoms therefore which they imagine accumulate is sometimes immense, almost past conception: for instance, to Pulsatilla, or common anemone, and nux vomica, there are no less than 11 pages octavo of symptoms detailed, that is, the symptoms which are supposed to result from taking the medicine in health, which is to be the true criterion of its administration in disease. Sulphur has thirteen pages, chamomile flowers has five, charcoal has 13, &c. &c. These are merely promiscuously quoted from Jahr's Manual. Jahr tells us, in his last edition, that the number of symptoms has lately been vastly augmented. In some medicines, as sulphur, sœpia, and phosphorus, and several others, he says they are increased to the number of 2000, and at this rate, in ten years, if Homœopathy lasts as long, I doubt not their number, like certain evil spirits of old, will then be "*legion*." The idea to be sure at first seems overwhelming, and we are

led to doubt the possibility of such minuteness, such an approximation to infinity; but when we come to analyze them and only read over and compare a few pages, the mystery at once vanishes; we find it one endless ding-dong, see-saw, over and over again, with about as many ideas as can be gathered from the woke-up rattle-box of an infant; every locality of the human frame is separately invoked from the head to the foot, outside and in, and furnished with a tongue, as it were, to relate its experience and tell just how it feels. We may here just remark, in passing, that it is this minuteness, this apparent exactitude and nicety, this particularity, and, as I think, ridiculous unmeaning inquisitiveness, this sitting down by the side of the patient, with pen, ink, and paper, as Hahnemann directs, and exalting every thought of the patient respecting himself, to which he gives utterance, into a something worthy to be recorded, and then the time required to put all these together to examine and compare and study, that perhaps more than any thing else, impresses him with an idea of the vast superiority of this system over any other that he has ever heard of, especially, if, as is often the case, his mind and body have been enfeebled by protracted and painful disease. The confidence thus inspired must inevitably tend to produce its invigorating, its health restoring influence. But to proceed with the subject of experiment, and to give you some idea how it is possible to accumulate symptoms to such an extent, you must be informed that all the sensations are infinitely subdivided; for example, "pain is subdivided into simple, obtuse, pressing, compressing, bending, jamming, pinching, cutting, stinging, drawing, tearing, teasing, shroozing, streaming, crawling, turning, boring, twisting, gnawing, eating, extending, scratching, knocking, jerking, acute, pulling, constricting, dislocating, burning," &c. &c. &c., and then we have the locality of pain, as pain in the head, the top of the head, the back of the head, the side of the head, behind the ears, in the forehead, over the eyes, in the eyes, in the eye-balls, in the eye-lids, under the eye-lids, &c. &c., ad infinitum. For example, we opened Jahr's Manual to the article *magnesia*: after taking an infinitesimal dose, the following are only a few of the symptoms; duration of effect is set down as 50 days.

"SLEEP. Frequent and violent yawning, desire to sleep during the day, sleeplessness, sometimes from oppression in the abdomen, or from anxious uneasiness and internal heat, with great dread of being uncovered—many anxious dreams, with talking, cries, and frightened starts, dreams of fire, flood, brigands, quarrels, money, pleasures, misfortunes, &c. &c. &c., to the extent of 5 pages—who will dare take *magnesia* any more, or give it to their young infants, if such are the effects that it produces, and that too from administering infinitely less than the millionth of a grain?

Pathological facts are to Homœopaths useless lumber as we have already hinted. Of what possible value are all the late splendid researches in Pathological anatomy and in Physiology, in the estimation of the man who could write such a sentence as

the following: "I cannot comprehend" says Hahnemann, "how it is possible for physicians to imagine that they ought to search the interior of the human economy: it is inaccessible, and concealed from our view," and again at page 26, "just as little" says he "as we can witness what is passing in the interior of our bodies in a healthy condition, and as certainly as they are concealed from us as they lie open to the sight of omniscience, just so little can we perceive the internal operations of the animal frame when life is disturbed by disease.—The action that takes place in diseases manifests itself only by external symptoms." I am aware that Homœopaths in this country deny the charge brought against Hahnemann of being opposed to pathological investigations, but his own pen has rendered the attempt futile. And Hahnemann is doubtless consistent with himself in this respect, for of what use can such researches be to a system which broadly and repeatedly asserts that sensation is the true, the only true index to disease? It is true, Hahnemann talks about the pulse and the tongue and the secretions, but it can only be for a similar reason to that which he gives for continuing a species of names for disease, "that we might," says he, by degrees dissipate the illusion."[†] But Hahnemann is not the only Homœopathist who speaks contemptuously of Pathology: another of authority sufficiently high for Hahnemann himself to quote, writes thus: "The Physician who engages in a search after the hidden springs of the internal economy will hourly be deceived; but the Homœopathist possesses himself of a guide that may be depended on." All our old therapeutical agents upon which physicians have leaned for centuries with safety and confidence are all anathematized. Bleeding is affirmed to be not only useless but pernicious under any circumstances whatsoever.—"The living human body," says Hahnemann, "never contained one drop of blood too much." Again, "a superabundance of blood can never exist"; and yet again, he says, "having recourse to bleedings nothing can justify." The substitute is aconite, as will appear from the following extract: "The most violent pleuritic fever, says he, with all its attendant alarming symptoms, is cured in the space of 24 hours at farthest, without loss of blood or any other antiphlogistic whatsoever, by giving one globule of sugar impregnated with the juice of aconite of the decillionth (30th) degree of dilution." Verily the days of miracles have come again.

Cupping and leeching and blistering and all coun-

† "Should it, however, be thought sometimes necessary to have names for diseases in order to render ourselves intelligible in a few words to the ordinary classes when speaking of a patient let none be made use of but such as are collective. We ought to say for example that the patient has a species of *chorca*, a species of *dropsy*, a species of *nervous fever*, a species of *ague*, because there certainly do not exist any diseases that are permanent and always retaining their identity, which deserve these denominations or others that are analogous. It is thus we might by degrees dissipate the illusion produced by the names of disease." p125. Organon.

* See Rees' Humbug, page 104.

ter-irritation; all liniments, fomentations, poultices, ointments are of course totally useless. "Even a stomach," says Hahnemann, "overburdened with indigestible food can never require an emetic. In such a case," says he, "nature knows full well how to disencumber herself of the excess by the spontaneous vomiting, which she excites, and which may at all times be aided by tickling the throat with the finger. But," he adds, "that if after the stomach has been *filled beyond measure* and the patient is tormented with acute pain in the epigastrium and does not experience the slightest desire to vomit, an emetic then would only cause a mortal inflammation of the intestines, whereas slight and repeated doses of a strong infusion of coffee would re-animate the stomach and place it in a condition to evacuate itself either upwards or downwards, however considerable in quantity the substances contained in its interior may have been." Or, in plain English, when the stomach is "*filled beyond measure*," the quantity must be increased to relieve it of its load. "In no case can an emetic ever be necessary," says Hahnemann, "not even in a sudden affection of the stomach with frequent nauseous eructations as of spoiled food accompanied with depression of mind, cold feet, hands, &c. &c. Here if, instead of an emetic, the patient should only *smell once* to a globe of sugar the size of a mustard seed, impregnated with the 30th dilution of pulsatilla, he is infallibly cured in the space of two hours." *Smelling* of gold too, he says, cures one species of mental derangement. This introduction of medicine into the system, by the nostrils, is purely Homœopathic. "Of late," says Hahnemann, "I have become convinced of the fact that smelling imparts a medicinal influence as energetic and as long continued as when the medicine is taken in substance by the mouth."—Again—"All that is cured by Homœopathy," says Hahnemann,—"may with the *most* certainty and safety be cured by this mode of receiving the medicine." And his 289th aphorism reads thus: "Every part of the body that is sensible to the touch is equally susceptible of receiving the impression of medicines and of conveying it to all other parts of the body." Dipping the finger then in medicine, must necessarily be as efficacious as taking it into the stomach, and more so, too, for the sense of touch is certainly more fully developed on the fingers than in any other portion of the human frame. For such a discovery alone, Hahnemann ought to receive the lasting thanks of all the delicate stomachs in the world. This confessedly goes far ahead of allopathy and no mistake. Purgatives, too, are denounced with equal severity. "There is apparently," says Hahnemann, "some necessity for the expulsion of worms in the so called worm disease. But," he adds, "even this appearance is false; they are all owing to the itch, connected with an unhealthy mode of living; if the regimen be ameliorated and the itch Homœopathically cured, few or no worms at all will remain." These are only a few specimens of the wonderful power of Homœopathy. While, however, it possesses such magical power over disease, exercised with such commendable regard to the comfort of the sick, it is singular that it should advocate intempe-

rance by a paragraph so entirely anti-temperance as the following which is found on the 75th page of the Organon:

"An experienced reaper," says Hahnemann, "however little he may be accustomed to the use of strong liquors, will not drink cold water (*contraria contrariis*) when the heat of the sun or the fatigue of hard labor have brought him into a feverish state; he is well aware of the danger that would ensue, and therefore takes a small quantity of some heating liquor, viz: a mouthful of brandy. Experience, the source of all truth, has convinced him of the advantage and efficacy of this homœopathic mode of proceeding."

Another peculiar feature about Homœopathy not much calculated to give it success with the thinking portion of community, is that their periodicals and other organs, animate and inanimate, speak of no *unsuccessful application* of their principles; none but palpable cases of cure are mentioned, and these are served up in a dress to suit the multitude. This is a feature which is certainly calculated to ally Homœopathy with empiricism, to say the least; and reminds one of the artful contrivance of the proprietor of a certain mineral spring in England, who kept one room in which were deposited the crutches of all those patients who had received so much benefit from the waters as not to require their assistance any longer. One day a company of ladies and gentlemen, as usual, were shown into this apartment with its 100s and 100s of crutches, and the virtues of the waters highly extolled, when an old decrepid servant of the establishment, who was seated in one corner of the room, said, in a low tone, to a gentleman who stood near, "Ah me!" said she, "ah me! they take good care to say nothing about the heaps of crutches we burn up every year, of the poor creatures who come here only to die. Dead bones tell no tales, you know."

The Homœopathic Examiner tells us that there are physicians in our country, and Hahnemann says that there are some in his, who, to use the language of another, run an "accommodation line," and practise either homœopathically or allopathically, just as their patients shall desire, and by many they are commended for such a spirit of compromise. But the real true Hahnemannian Homœopaths denounce them in no measured terms, and justly too, for there can be no compromise. Hahnemann calls them a new "mongrel sect, that continues to gnaw like a cancer upon the vitals of diseased human beings," he says further on, that they must be separated "by an immeasurable gulph from Homœopathy," and Jahr is no less severe when he says "from ignorance, for their personal convenience, or through charlatanism, they treat their patients one day Homœopathically and the next Allopathically." If Homœopathy is right, Allopathy must be wrong, and vice versa. "Homœopathy and Allopathy," says a writer in the Examiner, co-ordinate, not contradictory branches of the great art of healing, is more than we can fathom." Such men forcibly reminds one of an old border story where in a sparse settlement composed of individuals of all the various denominations of christians, it was agreed to build a meeting house;

all gave a little and the building was soon completed, but they found great difficulty in settling a minister; each sect wanted one of their own. At length a straggler offered, who agreed to preach alternately Presbyterianism, Episcopalianism, Methodistism, and Baptism.

Good may, and doubtless will, grow out of Homœopathy; the value of the system is in a fair way of being tested, if we may judge from the number of experimenters who are at work. It is unfortunate, however, for the success of the system that American Homœopaths are almost entirely indebted to Germany for their medicines; the American preparations are all powerless, or, at all events, Homœopaths declare that their system shall only be tested by German Physic, and hence the establishment in New York of a General Agency of the Central Homœopathic Pharmacy at Leipsic for the United States. Now, how is this? What potential influence is superadded to attenuated nothingness? We have heard of globules of Homœopathic medicine, producing powerful evacuations. This is all contrary to Hahnemann's Homœopathy; about this there is certainly some shade of mystery, to say the least, and the question is forced upon us, is there not such a thing as an allopathic dose in a homœopathic dress to be employed as a dernier resort in extreme cases? But we shall see, and although not a prophet nor the son of a prophet, I will venture to predict that Homœopathy and wisdom will not die together.

But after all, the public care but little about medical theories, for they understand but little about them. The great question with them is, "is Homœopathy in its power over disease what it professes to be?"

That there have been some, and perhaps many notable cures wrought of which Homœopathy claims the honor, there can be no manner of doubt. Not a medical charlatan that ever rode into notice from Paracelsus their chief down to Elisha Perkins and the Rain Water doctor of our own times but could do as much. The greater number of these, however, where chronic diseases of long standing and slow progress; a class of diseases which are usually benefited most by letting medicine alone, and their number is larger than is usually thought. It requires but little penetration to account for all this class of cures.

The air and the exercise and the travel; the wholesome diet and good cheer; the freedom from care and anxiety and unnecessary toil which Homœopaths invariably prescribe, together with an inspiration of confidence in the remedy and an observance of regular hours for meals and sleep, are agents in the cure of all chronic diseases of no trifling power; but who will pretend that there is any thing either new or Homœopathic in all this;—for centuries they have been the most efficient allies in every valuable system of the practice of physic; and yet without these, I will venture to affirm that all purely homœopathic prescriptions—*not* prescriptions of Allopathic doses in a homœopathic dress—but Hahnemann's own infinitesimals, will prove as utterly powerless in the removal of

real diseases as did charms and incantations and amulets in the by-gone days of superstition.

That Belladonna may, in proper effective doses, possess some power over that dangerous and highly congestive disease, scarlatina, I do not deny, neither am I prepared to affirm. I, however, remember well, thirty years ago, when a student of medicine, to have heard its prophylactic power over scarlet fever spoken of and claiming to rank with the vaccine virus in its power over variola, but such pretensions have long since passed away to their own place, except, perhaps, in the pretended estimation of those who keep the preparation on sale. See Chapman's Therapeutics, vol. 2, page 221.

It is possible too, that aconite, or pulsatilla, or some other new narcotic, may in a measure control the action of the heart; the idea is by no means a new one; but there can certainly be nothing homœopathic in it even if time should confirm their youthful pretensions. But it becomes us to remember that time has proved a sad destroyer to the reputation of many a medicine whose claims to distinction were far more promising than those we have mentioned. Look at Digitalis, of which even a Ferriar could say, "It was a substitute for the lancet and furnishes us with a means of controlling the pulse to our wish and of supporting a given state of velocity as long as we deem proper," and a Currie says, "I have employed the digitalis to a very considerable extent in inflammations of the brain, of the heart, and of the lungs, and in rheumatism, and have succeeded with it in situations where I should otherwise have despaired;" and Mossman, too, affirms that "pneumonic inflammation may be obviated with as much certainty as the progress of an intermittent fever is arrested by Peruvian bark;" and at a subsequent period he says, "it is here employed in almost every case of *increased vascular action*;" and again over these inflammations, "it certainly possesses powers *approximating to specific*"; and notwithstanding this high authority (and authorities like these might be multiplied to almost any extent) who now thinks of digitalis as a substitute for the lancet? and how few in the whole medical profession employ it at all, and then merely as an auxiliary to the lancet. Any one at all acquainted with the history of medicine knows full well that the high sounding reputation with which an article commences its career for distinction is no sort of criterion whereby to judge of the place it will occupy when it has been tried in time's crucible. How few among the thousands which have entered the course have ever won the prize.

But before undertaking to account for the power of Homœopathy over acute disease by its powerless prescriptions, I should choose to follow the sage advice the late Dr Mitchell was accustomed to give his class of natural history. "Gentlemen," said he, "be sure of the reality of a phenomenon before you attempt to explain it. I once paid severely for not heeding this rule. I was in company with a number of gentlemen at the springs, entertaining them with illustrations of natural history bordering on the marvellous. A rough looking old gentleman, but more of a wag than a fool, ascertaining from me that my name was Mitchell, said he would like

to hear me account for a singular circumstance that had occurred in his neighborhood. A young married lady, he said, a neighbor of his, was lately confined, and one half of the child was black, and the family felt greatly mortified. I attempted to account for it on philosophical principles, much, as I thought to the satisfaction of the company, when the gentleman interrupted me by saying that he forgot to mention that the other half was black also."

"Those who know nothing of the natural progress of a malady," says Dr. Holmes, in his lectures before the Boston Society for the Improvement of Useful Knowledge, "of its ordinary duration; of its various modes of terminating; of its liability to accidental complications; of the signs which mark its insignificance, or severity; of what is to be expected of it when left to itself; of how much or how little is to be anticipated from remedies,—those who know nothing or next to nothing of all these things and who are in a great state of excitement from benevolence, sympathy, or zeal for a new medical discovery, can hardly be expected to be sound judges of facts that have misled so many sagacious men who have spent their lives in their daily study and observation." This generation, especially, should not forget the popular humbug of Perkins' points. The grave of Perkinism is yet fresh; but what has become of "its 5000 printed cures, and its million and a half of computed ones, its miracles blazoned about through America, and Denmark, and England?" Can Homœopathy boast of greater achievements? Let us reflect on these, and I think we must all agree with Dr. Holmes, when he says that "after all this, we need not waste time in showing that medical accuracy is not to be looked for in the florid reports of benevolent associations: the assertions of illustrious patrons; the lax effusions of daily journals, or the effervescent gossip of the tea-table."

Homœopathic physicians and their friends, I know, think Allopathic physicians very obstinate and unreasonable, because they seem unwilling to give their system a trial. "Try it," they say, just as if it had not been tried a hundred times, and a hundred times fairly weighed in the balance and found wanting. We learn from the *Medico-Chir. Rev.* that "a German Homœopathist, practising in Russia, was invested by the Grand Duke Michael, with full powers to prove, if possible, by a comparison of facts, the advantages of Homœopathic measures over the ordinary modes of treatment, and a certain number of patients in the wards of a military hospital were entrusted to his care. At the expiration of two months, however, he was not permitted to proceed any further; for, in comparing the result, it was seen that of 457 patients, treated by the ordinary means, 364 or three-fourths were cured, and none died; whereas, by the homœopathic method tried on 128 patients, only 64, just one half, were cured, and five died. "In consequence of this, and other trials," says Dr. Johnson, "the Russian government looked on Homœopathy as a humbug, and published the results." Vol. 30, page 144. Those who desire to see accounts of other trials, are referred to Dr. Holmes's Lectures on "Homœopathy and its Kin-

dred Delusions," to the "Abracadabra of the 19th century, by Leo Wolf, M. D., of Philadelphia;" to Dr. McNaughton's Dissertation on Homœopathy, published in the 4th vol. of the Transactions of the New York State Medical Society; to Dr. Rees' Humbug of N. Y. to Johnson's Journal, vols. 25 and 30, &c. &c.

But notwithstanding all this which assuredly should satisfy any reasonable man, the cry is still repeated, try it. "Try it before you condemn it—don't suffer your minds to be warped by prejudice and fast-barred against conviction, just because you can't understand how these things can be." These appeals seem plausible, very plausible, indeed, and it must be confessed are wielded with some success, and to the prejudice of those against whom they are directed. They seem so overflowing with a superior candor and disinterestedness that one is almost tempted to fall down and do homage likewise. This wanton experimenting, however, upon the animal economy, don't, some how or other, just suit our fancy. It may be an amusing exercise, a pleasing pastime, for those who either have nothing else to do, or who set so low an estimate on human life as to handle it like a pretty plaything to "amuse children of a larger growth." But to the physician who views it as a priceless commodity entrusted, as it were, to him for its longest possible preservation, it becomes a serious business to trifle with it; to tamper with such a jewel; to jeopard its very existence, and especially by experiments which are confessedly the very antipodes of reason. However much he may like to be amused, or however much he would be gratified to know the result of certain experiments, he feels in duty bound to abstain from both under circumstances of such a nature, and as he regards peace of conscience here, and accountability beyond the grave, he acts upon the motto, "*Touch not, handle not.*"

Try Homœopathy! try whether a thing of nought can successfully grapple with an enemy of more than giant strength—whether a powerless remedy can remove an overpowering disease?—the very idea is preposterous. It would be presumption personified, and I trust honest allopathists will always be contented to leave such a task in homœopathic hands with all its honors and all its emoluments.

What would be thought of the sanity of the farmer, who had long been accustomed to conduct his agricultural pursuits by the labor of ox and horse and man, should he so far listen to the voice of a stranger ever so learned, who should tell him that after years of patient research and observation he had discovered an insect which would supersede every other needful power, and by only one of which he could readily perform all his necessary labor upon his farm; what would be tho't of him if he should be persuaded so far to yield up his better judgment, lay aside all his past experience, dispose of oxen, horses and men, and purchase this insect, and go fairly into the experiment, and fully test the validity of its claim? Whatever we might think, most assuredly in comparison with the physician who could be so egregiously duped as to disregard all past experience;

to lay aside the proper exercise of reason and common sense and recklessly cast away remedies of known and tried virtue for those of less, infinitely less than insect-strength, such conduct as the farmers would be the wisest by just as much as human life is more valuable than commodities attainable at pleasure. What? try the experiment of Homœopathy in acute and congestive disease, and suffer the critical moment upon which perchance the life of a loved and valued friend hangs suspended to pass by unimproved, or which is the same thing, occupied only in watching the results of experiments with Homœopathic *dilutions*, or *delusions*, as they should be termed? "Oh, tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon."

As I have already said however good may grow out of this system of infinite inconsistencies, stranger things have happened in our world. It is to the ideal phantom of the philosopher's stone that got such a fast hold of the human mind as for a century at least to urge from research to research, and from experiment to experiment, requiring the utmost toil, and labor, and patience, to which medicine is indebted for some of its most efficient remedies, and to which chemistry is indebted, we may almost say, for its very existence; and with chemistry, the arts and manufactures. To quackery, too, in one form and another, are we indebted for some of the best medicinal compounds; and so, doubtless, to Homœopathy may succeeding generations be indebted for some peculiar applica-

tion of medicines hitherto not dreamed of. It is next to impossible that so much research and observation as Homœopaths are now bestowing upon various substances drawn from the three kingdoms, animal, vegetable, and mineral, will not in time elicit some facts which will add value to the present stock of medical and pharmaceutical knowledge, but it is more than probable that all such honors even will be acquired like the crown of the conqueror only through fields of blood.

"We shall not waste much time on this system," says Dr. Johnston, "but we may observe, that granting, for the sake of argument, that every part of this system is as true as Holy Writ, both in its principles and details, yet we assert, that it is utterly incapable of being brought into practice among the profession of this or any other country in the world. It is only adapted for a few of the dilettanti who may choose to diddle dukes and humbug hypocondriacs; or for the dreams of enthusiasts, such as Hahnemann and the respectable portion of his followers. But looking at the new system in all its bearings, and without the slightest prejudice or jealousy, we do believe that it opens the widest door to quackery and knavery that has ever yet been presented to the adventurous and unprincipled in our profession. The Hahnemania, like other manias, will run its day, and vanish into thin air—though not before many lives are sacrificed at the altar of this new illusion."—*Med. Chir. Rev.*, Vol. 30, page 278.

